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Stories of Caarimon

Scenario Supplement for Belly of the Beaast

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Former Living Force Plot Director Morrie Mullins presents a supplement to the campaign's newest scenario. In "Stories of Caarimon," reporter Melanda Forswoth's person-in-the-street interviews about the Caarites start off badly and go downhill from there. This supplement ties into the May Living Force scenario, *Belly of the Beaast*, the conclusion of the "Metatheran Caution" trilogy.

Welcome to "Eye on Cularin." Yara Grugara is on assignment; I'm Melanda Forswoth.

Our top story: Who is the Metatheran Cartel? They've been in Cularin for several years, and yet we know almost nothing about them. What do they eat? What do they drink? Do they read the right holonets? Do they wear the right clothes? Our viewers deserve to know the truth about these individuals, what they do in their spare time, and what kinds of color schemes work well with their strange, piggish skintones. So, we'll start with what we know.

They come from somewhere called Caarimon, but no one goes there except for the Caarites themselves, and sometimes, the Filordi. Why the secrecy? What, oh what, could they be hiding? They're traders, not warriors, so that must mean that they have some sort of secretà well, some sort of secret something that they don't want anyone to know about.

To learn the facts, we went to the place where the facts live - - the streets of Cularin, in the hopes of discovering the truth about Caarimon.

Fade to the streets of Gadrin. Melanda stands, microphone in hand, beside the street. A pale, blue-skinned Twi'lek notices her and starts to walk in the opposite direction, but she hurries after him.

Melanda: Sir? Sir, could you please wait a moment? Sir, if I could ask your name?

The Twi'lek, clearly irritated, turns.

Twi'lek: You may call me Jaiteh.

Melanda: Well, Jaiteh, I'd like to - - I mean, hello. I'm Melanda Forswoth, from "Eye on Cularin."

Jaiteh: Isn't that Yara Grugara's show?

Melanda: Yara is on assignment. I'm filling in for her.

Jaiteh: You're almost as perky as she is. But not quite.

His lekku twitch, and his tone of voice makes it clear that this was not intended as a compliment.

Melanda: Thank you! I try. Now, can I ask you some questions?

Jaiteh[sighing]: Certainly.

Melanda: I'm conducting a series of interviews with people about Caarimon. You may not know that Caarimon is the world the Caarites - - they're the Metatheran Cartel - - come from.

Jaiteh: I seem to remember knowing that, yes. But I've never been to Caarimon, so I don't think I'd be much help to you. I'll just be on my way.

Melanda catches him by his arm, barely missing grabbing a lekku, and smiles almost as broadly as Yara might. It's clear the young woman has been studying tapes of the normal host.

Melanda: No, please. I don't think anyone on Cularin has been to Caarimon. I just wanted to get your perceptions of it. What have you heard? What do you think you know? A Caarite (second from left) and three other aliens.

Jaiteh: Those are very different things. What have I heard? I've heard that it's a small world, as befits a small people. I've heard that it has heavy gravity, and that precious metals are mined in shafts that stretch all the way through the planet.

Melanda: Um... wouldn't that create uncontrollable tectonic activity that might destabilize the entire planet and send it exploding in millions of chunks out into space?

Jaiteh: No.

Melanda: Oh. Okay.

Jaiteh: I've also heard that much of the world is forested, and that it has no spaceports. That the Caarites are actually a slave race working for the Hutt overlords who live beneath the planet's surface. I've heard that they don't drink anything fermented, ferment anything grown, or grow anything drunk or fermented. I've heard that on Caarimon, Caarites are immune to blaster fire and natural and artificial poisons, and that their skin becomes as hard as stone without losing any flexibility.

Melanda: That would make them virtually indestructible! Why would they ever leave home?

Jaiteh: They wouldn't. Which tells me that most or all of what I've heard

is not true. That leads me to your second question - - what do I think I know? I don't think I know anything. I tried doing business with them once, and I never got any closer to Caarimon than an account they siphon their funds through on Coruscant. They can keep their planet, for all I care.

Melanda: So, you don't know anything about the planet?

Jaiteh walks away. We fade to another street, more crowded. Again, Melanda stands just outside a throng of people, but rather than waiting, she wades into the middle of them. All of them but four - three Rodian females and a Wookiee male - leave when they see the camera. The "Metatheran Caution" Trilogy Summary The Metatheran Cartel has never been particularly popular with many of the people of Cularin, and things only get worse when a strange new illness arises that has strong links back to the Cartel. Are the heroes willing to trace the problem back to its core - wherever that may take them?

Melanda: Hello. I'm Melanda Forswoth, from "Eye on Cularin."

Rodian Female 1: Isn't that Yara's show?

Rodian Female 2: Where's Yara?

Rodian Female 3: Didn't you used to do the weather on one of the holonets?

Melanda's face pales a little, and she forces a smile.

Melanda: Yara is on assignment, and I'm filling in. We're talking to people on the street today - -

Rodian Female 2: We're on the sidewalk, not the street. It's not safe to stand in the street.

Rodian Female 1: Oh, I'd say not! Did you hear that there was another speeder accident, just this morning?

Rodian Female 2: Is that what you're here about, Belinda?

Melanda: It's Melanda, actually.

Rodian Female 2: What's Melanda? If you want to ask me questions about some "Melanda," you're going to be disappointed. I've never heard the word before. Is it Dosh? You don't want to speak Dosh around Nerrowr here.

Nerrowr: Grunt. Grunt.

Melanda looks off-camera. Melanda: Could someone get the translator working? All I got from the walking stench was two grunts.

Voice from off-camera: It's working, Mel.

Melanda turns pale and looks at the Wookiee, who shakes his head.

Nerrowr: I sometimes say "grunt" just in case the idiot who's talking to me is relying on a simple-minded translator. It can be very informative.

Melanda: Right. Do any of you know anything about Caarimon? No? All right, then, time to move on!

Fade in on Melanda standing in front of one of the brightly lit casinos of Tolea Biqua. She smiles too broadly, giving her an almost-Caarite appearance. Rough-looking types shove their way past her, entering and leaving the casino. She makes as if to grab one - a very tall humanoid with pale blue skin and an angry cast to his features - then, at the last moment, thinks better of it and taps him on the arm.

Melanda: Hello? I'm Melanda Forswoth, from "Eye on Cularin."

She waits for the obligatory question about Yara. Instead, the being looks her over appraisingly, glances at the camera, and smiles. His teeth appear to be sharpened.

Falsswon: Hello, Melanda Forswoth. What can Falsswon do for you, this day?

Melanda: Yara is on assignment - - oh. Sorry. I'm doing person-on-the-street interviews about Caarimon. Could you - - I mean, would you talk to me for a few minutes?

Falsswon: The homeworld of the Caarites? I could be... persuaded.

Melanda smiles her winningest smile, and he smiles back. Her straight white teeth make a disturbing contest with his sharpened teeth, all of which appear to be black near their roots.

Melanda: What do you know of the world of the Caarites?

Falsswon: Bleak. Large, too large for the small things that live there. Gave them an overdeveloped sense of presence in the galaxy. Or absence. Small on a large, empty world means one must develop ways to make oneself feel larger.

Melanda: But what about their culture?

Falsswon: Culture? The Caarites have no culture of their own. They take the cultures of others. They follow whatever trends will make them appear most a part of the galaxy, and not separate from it.

Melanda: Sounds reasonable.

Falsswon: If you are vapid and galactically inconsequential, certainly. The Caarites are dangerous because the only way to predict their activities is to watch what everyone else in the galaxy does, and then wonder what little change they will make to it. See how they followed the model of the Trade Federation, but have yet to get their charter revoked? It is because they know how to work with local politicians, rather than against them. They also chose their allies more... wisely.

Melanda: Right. But this isn't a political show. We're here to talk about their culture. You know, entertainment, fashion - -

Falsswon: And I told you, no such beast exists! You are a blithering dribble who has been let wander too far from her society page, Melanda Forswoth.

Melanda's mouth drops open, and she looks as though she might say something. Then Falsswon pulls a blaster, turns, and points it directly at the camera. We see a flash of light, then black.

Fade to Cularin Central Broadcasting's news floor. Yara Grugara sits behind the news desk, hands folded in front of her. She looks intense -- more intense than we've seen her since the Genarius scare last year.

That, my friends, is the last time Melanda Forswoth was seen. Yara spoke with CCB management at great length about whether to air the final clip, but if any of you can help us find this Falsswon -- "False One," how original, I wonder what his real name is? -- or if you have information about sweet young Melanda, please contact us.

This is Yara Grugara, for "Eye on Cularin," signing off.